

Prospect Hill
Brinkleyville
Halifax County
North Carolina

HABS No. NC-157

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
North Carolina District

Historic American Buildings Survey

Prepared at Washington Office

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PROSPECT HILL
Near Airlie, Halifax County, North Carolina

Owner: Myron Horn, Woodbury, Connecticut

Date of erection: Begun December 1825, completed September 1828

Builder-Owner: William Williams Thorne

Architect: Mr. Burgess

Present condition: Poor, interior woodwork removed

Description:

Frame; two stories; gable roof; end chimneys, two at east end, one at west. Facade three bays, all with triple openings. The center door is arched, with square-headed sidelights, and is protected by a porch with coupled turned and reeded posts. The lower windows have nine-over-nine-light sash in the center, with single-light wide sidelights. They are framed by narrow pilaster strips which support a curious crowning motive. This consists of an entablature over the center opening, flanked by an ogee transitional member and supporting a lunette. This is actually blind, but as it is glazed with black glass it appears to be real. The upper windows are similar but lack the lunette.

The cornice is particularly rich and includes both metopes and triglyphs, the latter reeded, and in place of guttae there are diminutive inverted fans.

In the rear is a one-story wing two bays in depth, with an end chimney. In this as well as in the main chimneys the brick is laid in Flemish bond, and the weatherings are laid with diagonal interlacing brick, as is usual in this area. In the northwest corner of the house is a two-story loggia contained under the main roof, which is supported here by three very attenuated Tuscan columns. Triple windows are on each floor, similar to those of the facade, occur within the loggia.

The interior woodwork was of considerable elaboration but was in many places coarse in detail and ungrammatical in form. The hall had a sheathed dado with a heavily moulded base and a delicate reeded cap. The plinth was marbleized.

The hall traverses the house from front to rear and has balancing entrances to the east and west rooms, except the rear east room, which is reached only through the front room. The doorways are framed by reeded pilasters supporting entablatures.

The architrave, which is fluted, is very narrow and forms the caps of the pilasters as well. The friezes are plain except for carved sunbursts in the pilaster-blocks. The cornice is enriched with a bizarre dentil band of pierced lozenges between long dentils. The fascia is filled with diagonal reeding. The rear part of the hall is set off from the front by an elliptical arch supported on delicate piers. These latter are paneled with pointed arches at the head. The caps are simply moulded and reeded. The arch itself is decorated with an applied guilloche inside of a carved band of garlands.

The stair is in one run from the rear wall to the front, but the lower steps are curved out so that the flight is, in a sense, a demi-ellipse. It is open-string in type, with the step brackets cut to a concave segment, against which is carved a scalloping of small fans. Below the brackets is a continuous band of guilloche ornament. The balusters are plain rectangles, two to a tread, and the handrail is a plain oval. The cornice of the hall is plaster run with mouldings and enriched with acanthus mutules, with rosettes between.

The most elaborate trim is in the west drawing room. The dado is similar to that in the hall, except that the cap is carved with a band of inverted oval fans. This motive reoccurs in the architrave of the over windows and the mantel. The latter has coupled diagonally reeded engaged columns supporting an entablature the frieze of which is divided into five rectangular panels all carved with $\frac{1}{2}$ fans in each corner, and the larger rectangles with sunbursts in the center. The cornice is similar to the hall over door, except that the diagonal reeding gives place to an interlacing ribbon design. The windows are framed by narrow paneled pilasters with applied guilloche. The entablatures are substantially repeats of that of the mantel. The door frame is similar to those of the windows but truncated.

The east room has simpler trim of the same general design. The door pilasters are reeded and the entablature is much simplified. The mantel, however, is even more elaborate than that of the west room, and instead of the columns it has broad pilasters filled with vine carving.

Additional data: The account books of the builder are extant and give the dates and authorship of the building. Entries are as follows:

March, 1825, ----	To cash paid Peter for hauling rock -	\$ 21.25
March, 1825, ----	To sawyers - - - - -	100.00
May, 1827, -----	To stonemasons - - - - -	122.00
Dec., 1827, -----	Oil Paint- - - - -	92.00
Dec., 1827, v-----	Locks and hinges- - - - -	26.81
Sept., 1828, ----	To Brass Locks- - - - -	12.00
Sept., 1828, --	Plastering (Decorator from N. C.) --	395.00
Sept., 1828, ---	To architect - - - - -	1800.00